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Making Good Citizens: Education and Civil Society is a fourteen-chapter collection of essays that examines education's contribution to civil society in America. Its editors, Diane Ravitch and Joseph P. Viteritti, direct New York University's Program on Education and Civil Society (PECS) and have previously co-edited two volumes, *New Schools for a New Century: The Redesign of Urban Education* (Yale, 1997) and *City Schools: Lessons from New York* (Johns Hopkins, 2000). The current volume is part of a series sponsored by PECS with support from the John M. Olin Foundation and the Achelis and Bodman Foundations.

The foundational premise of this collection, shared by thinkers from a variety of disciplines and familiarly expressed elsewhere in multiple forums over the past two decades, is that civil society—that aspect of community life nurtured by association and social interaction and existing "somewhere between the individual and government"—has been seriously eroding throughout the 20th century (2). *Making Good Citizens* addresses how schooling has contributed to civil society's decline and how changes in education might affect civil society in the future. Although not all of the essays in the volume explicitly promote school choice (via vouchers or charter programs, for instance), the collection in general supports a neoliberal critique of the traditional common school model as having become "obsolete," with public schools "embrac[ing] diversity as their mission at the cost of civic assimilation" (5). The topics taken up by the volume's contributing authors are wide ranging, stretching from analyses of the present condition ("Are we losing our capacity to live together in vibrant and productive communities?") to proposals that we adopt more international perspectives on schooling models (What might we learn from other nations as we think about ways to make education more conducive to a robust democracy?").

The majority of essays treat the broadly defined topic of the relationship between education and democracy, which includes questioning the place of religion in American public schooling and the alternative educational models that have arisen, in part, to satisfy citizens with a plurality of values. In the opening essay, "Education and Democracy," for instance, Ravitch critically reviews the work of important theorists of education such as Noah Webster, Thomas Jefferson, Horace Mann, John Dewy, and Robert Hutchins, with the ostensible goal of reminding readers that each writer's educational model suits a particular conception of the social order that he or she—including Ravitch herself—envisions. Taking to task thinkers and models that advocate progressive educational practices, such as the implementation of an industrial-education curriculum, or, in the worst-case scenario described by Hutchins, "a curriculumless curriculum, the school that meets all needs, the program of infinite variety, lacking any ideals, any sense of good and bad, or better and worse" (25), Ravitch champions an "academic" model that would educate all citizens properly. The aims of Ravitch's preferred model, such as empowering student-citizens and preventing them from "simply playing their role in someone else's marketing schemes" (28), are inspiringly stated. Altogether, however, the essay is something of a sales pitch for school choice, one that operates on the unquestioned assumption that progressive and academic curricula are mutually exclusive options.

Three of the most intriguing and useful essays in the volume investigate the reciprocal relationship between schooling practices and civic involvement. The first, "Education and Democratic Citizenship," by Norman Nie and D. Sunshine Hillygus, is an empirical study of the curricular content of higher education. Although the data Nie and Hillygus interpret—from the National Center for Education Statistics' 1994 follow-up study to the "Baccalaureate and Beyond" longitudinal survey—is significantly limited to a rather homogeneous sociological and racial demographic (i.e., 5% black, 4% Hispanic), their study nevertheless helps fill a gap in research that has heretofore concentrated on the quantity of education as an indicator of knowledge about and participation in civic affairs. Nie and Hillygus find that "individuals with greater verbal aptitude [as measured on Scholastic Aptitude Tests] are more politically active, civic-minded, and attuned to public affairs" (50). As a result, they suggest that early-curriculum intervention is perhaps a more significant factor in determining individuals' levels of community involvement than post-secondary developments: "greater emphasis on the development of verbal skills (particularly reading and writing) in elementary and secondary education should certainly be considered" (51). They also propose refurbishing collegiate social science curricula to protect and enhance citizens' community engagement.

Robert D. Putnam examines the education-civic engagement dynamic from the reverse angle. In "Community-Based Social Capital and Educational Performance," Putnam tests the hypothesis that greater social capital—the social networks and the trust arising from them—promotes more effective education, which is measured by several outcome indicators such as National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) scores, SAT scores, and dropout rates. Employing whole-state data from all 50 states, Putnam's analysis suggests that social capital

has a more significant impact on educational performance than race, class size, or dollars spent per student. Putnam's findings are valuable for many reasons, not least because they raise the important question of how to develop greater stores of social capital, if we accept his claims about its decline in his much heralded book, *Bowling Alone: The Collapse and Revival of American Community* (Simon & Schuster 2000). In that publication, as here, in shorter form, Putnam asserts that traditional, often geographically or historically determined forms of association—those commented on by Tocqueville, for instance—have eroded and have been replaced by nominal participation in large-scale organizations such as the American Association of Retired Persons (AARP), the American Automobile Association (AAA), and a host of national environmental or other advocacy-based groups. The multi-state findings Putnam shares here reasonably suggest that we must be careful about bolstering preexisting forms of social capital if it serves only to "reinforce existing social inequities" (85). In a truly democratic society, Putnam asserts, it may be more difficult, but also more valuable, to concentrate on developing "bridging social capital," networks of association among people unlike ourselves, rather than "bonding social capital," those networks linking us to people like ourselves.

The third essay in this group by Gerald Grant puts a face on the issues treated in the two previous chapters. In "Fluctuations of Social Capital in an Urban Neighborhood," Grant relates the history of contrasting social and educational developments in two New York neighborhoods. Combining personal observation with ethnographic and census data, Grant's study of the Westcott and Brighton neighborhoods suggests that both social policy and increased desire for suburban living contributed to the "leakage of social capital" that threatened to devastate those communities and the efficacy of their public schools. He concludes that providing universal pre-school and after-school programs is the "most promising avenue for increasing the supply of social capital," as long as they are more family-like than school-like (118-19).

The other essays in *Making Good Citizens* address the values at stake in almost any debate on the relationship between schooling and an aptitude for civic engagement. Although not direct responses to Grant's essay, Nathan Glazer's "Some Problems in Acknowledging Diversity" and Mark Holmes' "Education and Citizenship in an Age of Pluralism" imagine ways of making schooling more responsive to the need for family-like social capital Grant envisions. They also return the volume squarely to its sympathetic stance on school choice. Glazer investigates reasons why families with values at odds with those taught in public schools have sought alternative educational programs. He concludes that although the influences of value-based decisions on shaping curricula will have varied results, "[e]very school that escapes the restraints of the typical big-city school bureaucracy, and that calls on teacher and parental energy to create a school that engages student interest more effectively, will offer educational advantages" (184). Sensitive to the potential for understanding his essay as operating on the false dilemma of progressive/pluralist-embracing schooling vs. academic/homogenizing schooling described above, Mark Holmes is careful to suggest that schools should teach the "core values present throughout our pluralist, democratic society" (210).

However, he places his greatest faith not in what he calls the "totalitarian enforcement" of curricula in common schools, but in "keeping alive the flicker of virtue, at least within educational communities of choice, and enhancing standards of civility" (209).

Making Good Citizens closes with an essay entitled "Risking Choice, Redressing Inequality" by the volume's other editor, Joseph P. Viteritti. Viteritti's purpose in this essay is "to assess how school choice might help alleviate the problem of inequality," by which he means inequalities in opportunity, achievement, and civic engagement according to race. Making school choices via vouchers or charter programs available to a broader group of Americans, namely racial and economic minorities living in urban centers, he suggests, does entail the risk of further social splintering. Nevertheless, Viteritti argues, the very act of choosing which school one's child will attend "is a form of civic involvement that builds individual social capital. It is a manifestation of economic and political empowerment that should be shared by all people" (339).

Viteritti's "Risking Choice, Redressing Inequality" should have been the volume's inaugural essay because it would have established the purpose of the collection in a more straightforward way than Ravitch's historical review. Individual essays within the collection, especially those by Nie and Hillygus, Putnam, and Grant, are instructive in terms of their emphasis on the broader questions suggested by the volume's title: What is the relationship between education and community involvement? How do we make good citizens? As a whole, *Making Good Citizens* will be mostly useful in upper-level undergraduate and graduate education, public policy, or social theory courses treating the contested issue of school choice.